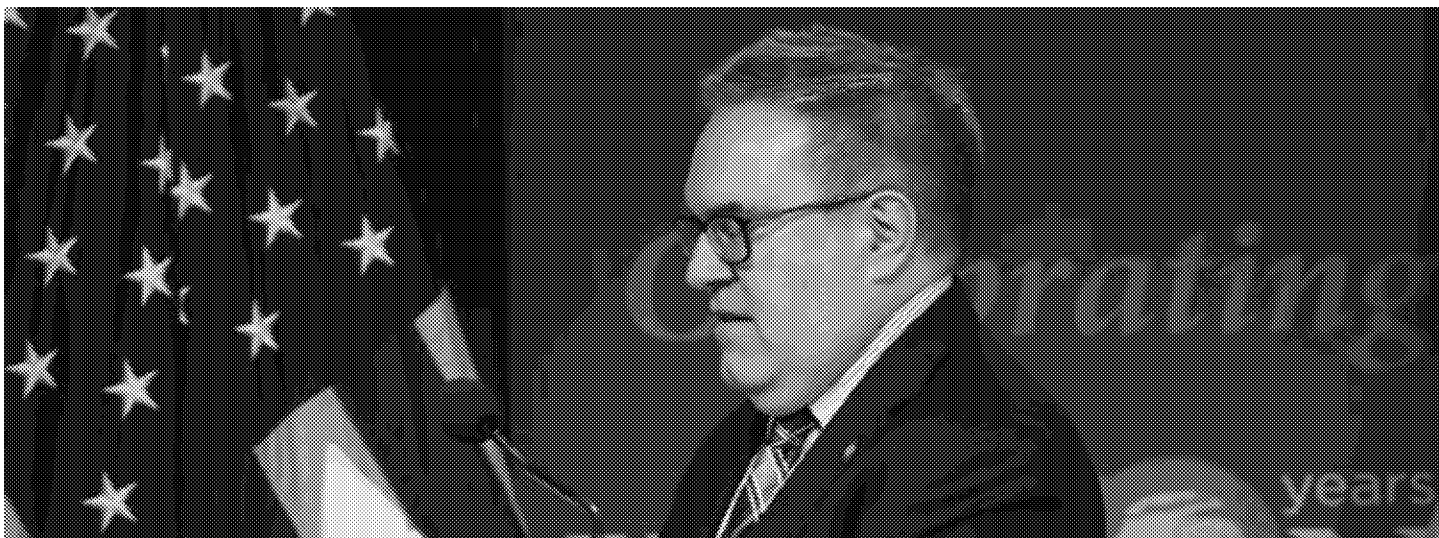


Message

From: Tanner, Barbara [Tanner.Barbara@epa.gov]
Sent: 4/3/2019 6:27:07 PM
To: Faeth, Lisa [Faeth.Lisa@epa.gov]; Anderson, Steve [Anderson.Steve@epa.gov]; Askinazi, Valerie [Askinazi.Valerie@epa.gov]; Baptist, Erik [Baptist.Erik@epa.gov]; Barkas, Jessica [barkas.jessica@epa.gov]; Beck, Nancy [Beck.Nancy@epa.gov]; Bertrand, Charlotte [Bertrand.Charlotte@epa.gov]; Blair, Susanna [Blair.Susanna@epa.gov]; Buster, Pamela [Buster.Pamela@epa.gov]; Canavan, Sheila [Canavan.Sheila@epa.gov]; Caraballo, Mario [Caraballo.Mario@epa.gov]; Carroll, Megan [Carroll.Megan@epa.gov]; Cherepy, Andrea [Cherepy.Andrea@epa.gov]; Christian, Myrta [Christian.Myrta@epa.gov]; Corado, Ana [Corado.Ana@epa.gov]; Davies, Clive [Davies.Clive@epa.gov]; Dekleva, Lynn [dekleva.lynn@epa.gov]; Devito, Steve [Devito.Steve@epa.gov]; Doa, Maria [Doa.Maria@epa.gov]; Drewes, Scott [Drewes.Scott@epa.gov]; Dunn, Alexandra [dunn.alexandra@epa.gov]; Dunton, Cheryl [Dunton.Cheryl@epa.gov]; Edelstein, Rebecca [Edelstein.Rebecca@epa.gov]; Edmonds, Marc [Edmonds.Marc@epa.gov]; Elwood, Holly [Elwood.Holly@epa.gov]; Farquharson, Chenise [Farquharson.Chenise@epa.gov]; Fehrenbacher, Cathy [Fehrenbacher.Cathy@epa.gov]; Feustel, Ingrid [feustel.ingrid@epa.gov]; Frank, Donald [Frank.Donald@epa.gov]; Gibson, Hugh [Gibson.Hugh@epa.gov]; Gimlin, Peter [Gimlin.Peter@epa.gov]; Gorder, Chris [Gorder.Chris@epa.gov]; Gordon, Brittney [Gordon.Brittney@epa.gov]; Grant, Brian [Grant.Brian@epa.gov]; Gray, Shawna [Gray.Shawna@epa.gov]; Groeneveld, Thomas [Groeneveld.Thomas@epa.gov]; Guthrie, Christina [Guthrie.Christina@epa.gov]; Hanley, Mary [Hanley.Mary@epa.gov]; Helfgott, Daniel [Helfgott.Daniel@epa.gov]; Henry, Tala [Henry.Tala@epa.gov]; Kapust, Edna [Kapust.Edna@epa.gov]; Kemme, Sara [kemme.sara@epa.gov]; Koch, Erin [Koch.Erin@epa.gov]; Krasnic, Toni [krasnic.toni@epa.gov]; Lavoie, Emma [Lavoie.Emma@epa.gov]; Lee, Mari [Lee.Mari@epa.gov]; Lee, Virginia [Lee.Virginia@epa.gov]; Leopard, Matthew (OEI) [Leopard.Matthew@epa.gov]; Liva, Aakruti [Liva.Aakruti@epa.gov]; Lobar, Bryan [Lobar.Bryan@epa.gov]; Mclean, Kevin [Mclean.Kevin@epa.gov]; Menasche, Claudia [Menasche.Claudia@epa.gov]; Morris, Jeff [Morris.Jeff@epa.gov]; Moss, Kenneth [Moss.Kenneth@epa.gov]; Mottley, Tanya [Mottley.Tanya@epa.gov]; Moyer, Adam [moyer.adam@epa.gov]; Myers, Irina [Myers.Irina@epa.gov]; Myrick, Pamela [Myrick.Pamela@epa.gov]; Nazef, Laura [Nazef.Laura@epa.gov]; Ortiz, Julia [Ortiz.Julia@epa.gov]; Owen, Elise [Owen.Elise@epa.gov]; Parsons, Doug [Parsons.Douglas@epa.gov]; Passe, Loraine [Passe.Loraine@epa.gov]; Pierce, Alison [Pierce.Alison@epa.gov]; Pratt, Johnk [Pratt.Johnk@epa.gov]; Price, Michelle [Price.Michelle@epa.gov]; Reese, Recie [Reese.Recie@epa.gov]; Reisman, Larry [Reisman.Larry@epa.gov]; Rice, Cody [Rice.Cody@epa.gov]; Richardson, Vickie [Richardson.Vickie@epa.gov]; Ross, Philip [Ross.Philip@epa.gov]; Sadowsky, Don [Sadowsky.Don@epa.gov]; Santacroce, Jeffrey [Santacroce.Jeffrey@epa.gov]; Saxton, Dion [Saxton.Dion@epa.gov]; Scarano, Louis [Scarano.Louis@epa.gov]; Scheifele, Hans [Scheifele.Hans@epa.gov]; Schmit, Ryan [schmit.ryan@epa.gov]; Schweer, Greg [Schweer.Greg@epa.gov]; Scott Selken **Personal Email / Ex. 6** [Scott.Selken@epa.gov]; Scott, Elizabeth [Scott.Elizabeth@epa.gov]; Selby-Mohamadu, Yvette [Selby-Mohamadu.Yvette@epa.gov]; Seltzer, Mark [Seltzer.Mark@epa.gov]; Sheehan, Eileen [Sheehan.Eileen@epa.gov]; Sherlock, Scott [Sherlock.Scott@epa.gov]; Simons, Andrew [Simons.Andrew@epa.gov]; Sirmons, Chandler [Sirmons.Chandler@epa.gov]; Slotnick, Sue [Slotnick.Sue@epa.gov]; Smith, David G. [Smith.DavidG@epa.gov]; Smith-Seam, Rhoda [smith-seam.rhoda@epa.gov]; Stedeford, Todd [Stedeford.Todd@epa.gov]; Strauss, Linda [Strauss.Linda@epa.gov]; Symmes, Brian [Symmes.Brian@epa.gov]; Thompson, Tony [Thompson.Tony@epa.gov]; Tierney, Meghan [Tierney.Meghan@epa.gov]; Tillman, Thomas [Tillman.Thomas@epa.gov]; Tomassoni, Guy [Tomassoni.Guy@epa.gov]; Tran, Chi [Tran.Chi@epa.gov]; Turk, David [Turk.David@epa.gov]; Vendinello, Lynn [Vendinello.Lynn@epa.gov]; Wallace, Ryan [Wallace.Ryan@epa.gov]; Wheeler, Cindy [Wheeler.Cindy@epa.gov]; Widawsky, David [Widawsky.David@epa.gov]; Williams, Aresia [Williams.Aresia@epa.gov]; Williams, Bridget [Williams.Bridget@epa.gov]; Williamson, Tracy [Williamson.Tracy@epa.gov]; Wills, Jennifer [Wills.Jennifer@epa.gov]; Wise, Louise [Wise.Louise@epa.gov]; Wolf, Joel [Wolf.Joel@epa.gov]; Wright, Tracy [Wright.Tracy@epa.gov]; Yowell, John [yowell.john@epa.gov]; Tanner, Barbara [Tanner.Barbara@epa.gov]
Subject: News Articles (For EPA Distribution Only)

BNA.COM ARTICLES



EPA's Wheeler Defends Budget Cuts in Face of Bipartisan Pushback

Posted April 2, 2019, 4:07 PM

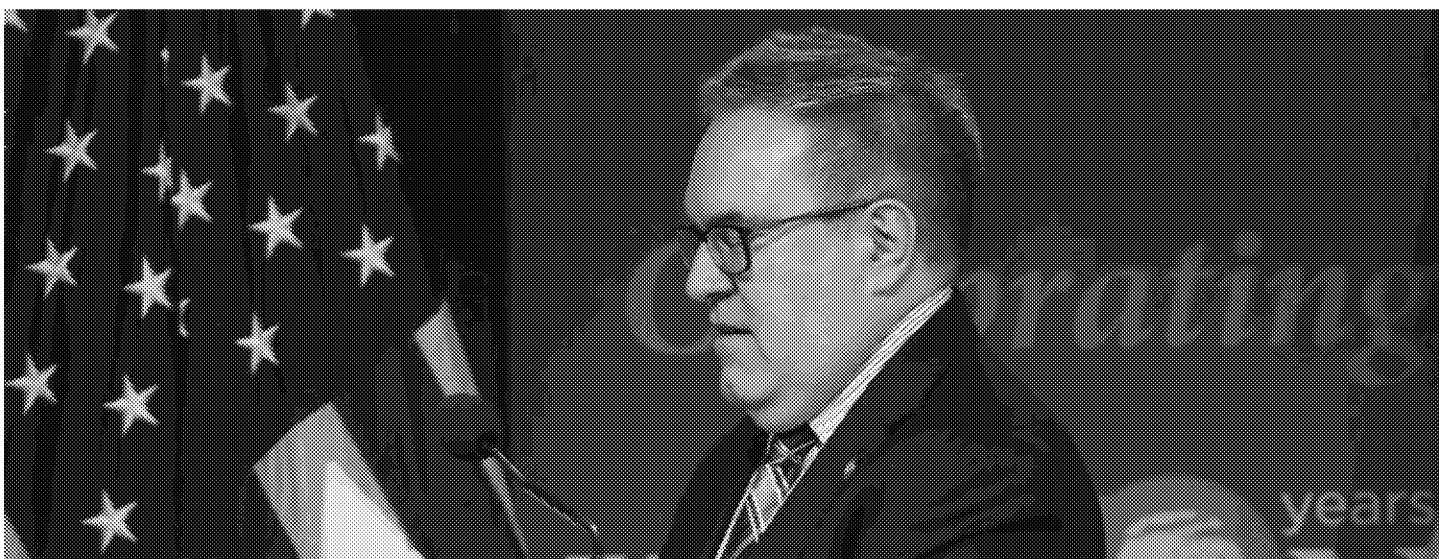
By Abby Smith

- Top Republican on House panel raises alarm on cuts to state grants, EPA research
- Great Lakes program won't face cuts following Trump pledge to fully fund, Wheeler says

EPA head Andrew Wheeler defended the Trump administration's proposed cuts to the agency's budget, even in the face of bipartisan pushback that many of the cuts go too far.

The Trump administration's fiscal year 2020 budget request proposed slashing the Environmental Protection Agency's budget by nearly \$2 billion, consistent with prior requests. That includes steep cuts to programs with bipartisan support in Congress, such as the EPA's grants to states and tribes to implement environmental protections, and the agency's geographic...

<https://news.bloombergenvironment.com/environment-and-energy/epas-wheeler-defends-budget-cuts-in-face-of-bipartisan-pushback>



EPA's Fluorinated Chemical Risk Assessments Due Out in 2020

Posted April 2, 2019, 4:52 PM

- EPA releases schedule for IRIS assessments
- Agency assessing several PFAS chemicals

The EPA plans to release drafts of its chemical risk assessments for a handful of ubiquitous chemicals in 2020.

The Environmental Protection Agency is studying the potential adverse health effects of human exposure to poly- and perfluoroalkyl substances, also known as PFAS, under the Integrated Risk Information Program.

The agency on April 2 released its time frame for public comment on draft assessments of PFNA, PFBA, PFHxA, PFHxS, and PFDA projecting comment submission for the third or fourth quarters of fiscal year 2020.

There are thousands of chemicals in the PFAS family, and some are being found in drinking water around the country. Manufacturers have used PFAS chemicals to make nonstick and stain-resistant coatings in clothing, fast-food wrappers, carpets, and other consumer and industrial products.

PFAS chemicals may cause adverse health effects, including developmental harm to fetuses, testicular and kidney cancer, liver damage, immune system or thyroid effects, and changes in cholesterol, where exposure levels exceed certain levels, according to the EPA.

State and federal regulators combine the EPA's IRIS assessments with exposure information to set standards and regulations on air and water pollution, chemicals, and contaminated sites.

<https://news.bloombergenvironment.com/environment-and-energy/epas-fluorinated-chemical-risk-assessments-due-out-in-2020>

INSIDEEPA.COM ARTICLES

Democrats Charge EPA Shift Of IRIS Staff To TSCA Violates Spending Law

Democratic appropriators are urging EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler to restore the Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) program's scaled-back agenda and return staff that had been shifted to the toxics office, charging their redirection amounts to a cut to the IRIS budget in violation of congressional appropriations.

House Democrats Press Wheeler For Answers On EPA's Declining Staffing

Democratic appropriators in the House are pressing EPA chief Andrew Wheeler on what he is doing to shore up the agency's workforce, expressing concerns that agency leadership is not maintaining staff at levels allowed by prior funding laws and that staff departures are jeopardizing environmental protection.

EPA's Budget Request

Wheeler will testify twice to Congress this week at hearings on [EPA's FY20 budget request](#), although he can expect questions from House and Senate lawmakers on topics beyond the funding proposal. He could face queries on EPA's deregulatory rollbacks of Obama-era rules, as well as controversial issues including its plan to address per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in drinking water, and other topics of concern to members of the spending panels.

The House Appropriations Committee's interior panel with oversight of EPA's budget holds its hearing on the FY20 request April 2, with Wheeler as the sole witness.

On April 3, the Senate Appropriations Committee holds its EPA FY20 budget hearing, with testimony from Wheeler and EPA Chief Financial Office Holly Greaves.

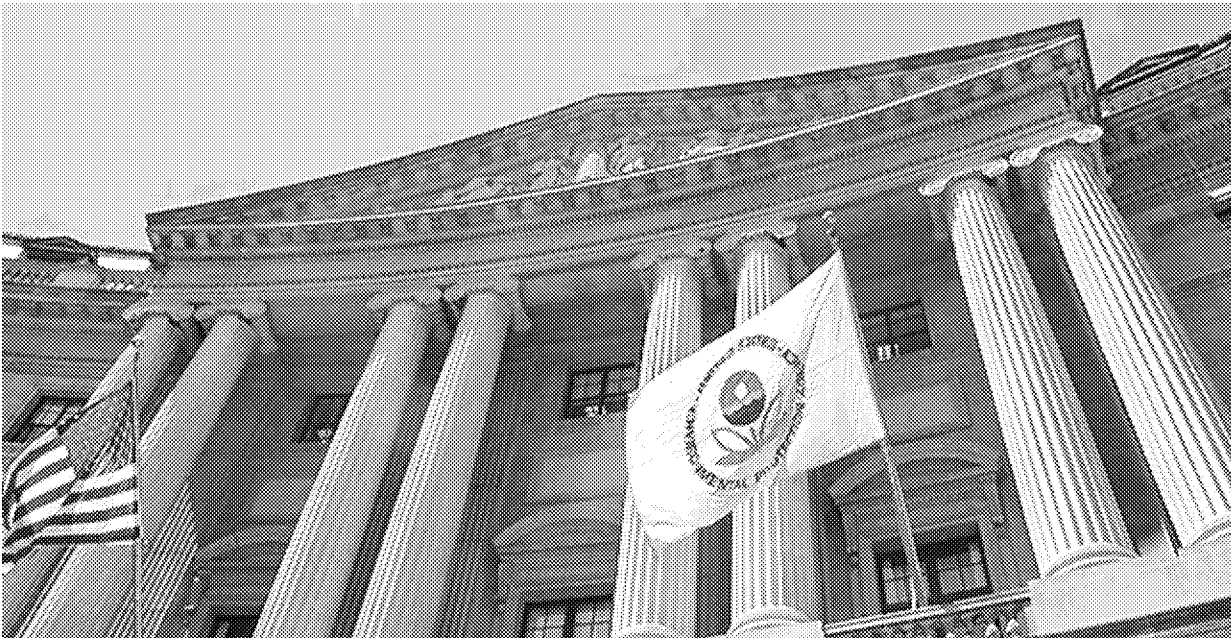
Lawmakers will debate President Donald Trump's request to cut the agency's funding from its current \$8.9 billion budget down to \$6.1 billion. Several House and Senate members have said that Congress will not grant such a steep cut, reflecting a pattern of prior years where lawmakers have accepted some cuts to EPA's funding but not the massive cuts sought by Trump.

<https://insideepa.com/the-week-ahead>

GREENWIRE ARTICLES

Appropriators: EPA trying to 'debilitate' testing program

Corbin Hiar, E&E News reporter



EPA headquarters in Washington. NRDC/Flickr

Published: Tuesday, April 2, 2019

Top Democratic appropriators are accusing EPA of "undercutting" its chemical risk assessment efforts "in violation of Congressional directives" and are ratcheting up their oversight of the agency.

At issue are changes EPA has made to the chemical-testing priorities and staffing resources of its Integrated Risk Information System, a science-focused program housed in the agency's research arm (***E&E News PM***, March 4).

After the Republican-controlled Senate released a fiscal 2019 spending bill that sought to zero out IRIS's \$22 million budget, appropriators passed an omnibus bill last year that maintained funding for the program and directed that it continue to reside "within the Office of Research and Development" (*Greenwire*, March 22, 2018).

But last month, an IRIS audit by the Government Accountability Office found "EPA leadership took steps to effectively cut the IRIS program's funding by reducing its workload by 50 percent and reassigning significant portions of staff time to other activities," wrote Sen. Tom Udall (D-N.M.) and Rep. Betty McCollum (D-Minn.).

"We view these steps as clear efforts to debilitate the IRIS program," the lawmakers said in the March 28 **letter** obtained by E&E News. Udall and McCollum are ranking member and chairwoman, respectively, of each chamber's Interior-EPA spending panel.

They're calling on EPA to "immediately comply" with its budget and respond to a series of questions about the amount of time IRIS staff had spent working for the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention — a regulatory arm of the agency that's historically been more prone to political interference — and how the staffers were paid for their efforts.

Asked for comment on the letter, EPA spokesman Michael Abboud said "we will respond through the proper channels."

Wheeler defended EPA's fiscal 2020 budget request in McCollum's subcommittee this morning and will face Udall tomorrow (*see related story*).

5 takeaways from Wheeler's House appearance

George Cahlink and Kevin Bogardus, E&E News reporters



EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler on Capitol Hill yesterday. House Appropriations Committee

Published: Wednesday, April 3, 2019

EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler found himself on the defensive yesterday as House Democrats bashed proposals for slashing the agency's budget and warned him against pursuing regulatory rollbacks.

"I think the EPA does have a role to play in protecting our air and water. We were making it clear that some of the Obama administration rules that were in place are a part of the EPA's charter to protect air and water," House Interior-EPA Appropriations Subcommittee Chairwoman Betty McCollum (D-Minn.) told E&E News after the two-hour hearing.

McCollum said she would push for a "significant bump" for EPA when she writes her panel's fiscal 2020 spending bill. She does not yet have a date for the markup but expects to have the legislation ready for floor action in June.

Here are five takeaways from Wheeler's first congressional hearing since his Senate confirmation earlier this year.

Great Lakes getting funded

The Trump administration loves the Great Lakes. Just ignore its budget request.

Last week, President Trump said at a Michigan campaign rally he would fully fund the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. His budget plan for fiscal 2020, however, would only give \$30 million for the effort — or about 10% of its current funding.

Under questioning from Rep. David Joyce (R-Ohio), the subcommittee's ranking member, Wheeler said he agreed with the president's remarks and that EPA was working with the Office of Management and Budget on how best to address Trump's directive.

The cleanup program would receive \$300 million under the changed plan, according to Wheeler. In addition, the EPA chief said he was working on coordinating a joint visit to the Great Lakes with Canada's environment minister.

Wheeler reminisced about growing up in Ohio.

"I believe I am the only EPA administrator in the history of the agency to go swimming in the Great Lakes," Wheeler said at yesterday's hearing. "I love the Great Lakes."

Joyce also remembered his childhood when he went swimming in Lake Erie.

"I'm amazed I still have any hair," Joyce jokingly said. "We have come a long way since those days with the restoration initiative and the efforts we have done."

Sidestepping climate

Wheeler largely sidestepped talk about EPA action on climate change, not even using the word "climate" in his seven-page opening statement.

While mentioning that EPA would be a global leader on clean air and safe drinking water, Wheeler was far more comfortable talking about regulatory changes underway at the agency.

He noted EPA helped with Trump's "record economic gains" by finalizing 38 "deregulatory" actions that saved \$3 billion.

Democratic appropriator Chellie Pingree from Maine tried to goad Wheeler on climate change, noting he had recently said he does not see global warming as a top environmental threat.

"If this isn't an existential threat, I don't know what is," she told the EPA chief.

Wheeler did not bite and denied Democratic charges that the Trump administration dismantled President Obama's signature climate initiative, the Clean Power Plan. He said the Supreme Court opted to put that effort to curb emissions on hold.

Workforce woes

EPA's green workforce is graying.

Wheeler said he's concerned that about 40% of EPA employees will be eligible for retirement within the next five years.

"We're trying" to replace them, said Wheeler, who added that he had been personally involved with the recent hiring of the agency's first permanent chief of human resources in several years.

But Wheeler conceded that for every new employee walking in the door, there seems to be another leaving.

For example, he noted, the agency hired 30 new employees to work on the Toxic Substances Control Act program last year, but about 30 current employees also left the TSCA program last year.

Rep. Mike Quigley (D-Ill.) said more than 100 employees have left EPA's Region 5 over the past year and that few of the scientists, program managers and other personnel have been replaced.

He said some of the difficulty in filling openings and keeping employees may come from frustration among workers with Trump environmental policies.

Democrats asked Wheeler to provide them a detailed strategic plan for hiring and recruiting workers during the next several years.

Emissions blowback

Top House Democratic appropriator Nita Lowey of New York, who roundly criticized proposed EPA budget cuts, saved some of her toughest words for proposed rollbacks of Obama-era car emissions standards.

"To say I am concerned about this action is an understatement," Lowey said of an administration plan that would in effect freeze plans to reduce tailpipe emissions by keeping them at 2020 levels through 2026.

She asked Wheeler whether he could name a single car manufacturer that supported the rollback, which has caused some angst in the automotive community because it could lead to a state-by-state regulatory approach for emissions.

Wheeler did not name an auto manufacturer but said car companies were paying penalties or using credits to get around Obama standards. He insisted any new approach would still cut emissions, lead to savings for car buyers and have the support of most states.

Lowey's concerns, though, suggest EPA's plan might not get far.

The chairwoman could seek to use this year's spending bill to block the Trump administration from spending any dollars for overhauling car emissions rules.

Cooling-off period

A year ago, Wheeler's predecessor at EPA, Scott Pruitt, was having a much more difficult time on Capitol Hill.

In a single day, he testified at not one but two congressional hearings. Both rooms were packed as he fought for his political life, pushing back against various ethics allegations and facing calls to resign.

The story was much different yesterday for Wheeler at his inaugural appearance since his confirmation as EPA chief. Much of lawmakers' questioning centered on EPA policies rather than him personally. Rows of seats sat empty.

Toward the end of the hearing, Rep. Mike Simpson (R-Idaho) lightheartedly asked Wheeler whether EPA really cared about the environment.

"Yes, I would say we all care about the environment. I take the mission of the agency very seriously, to protect the environment and public health," Wheeler said.

Simpson quipped in return, "Because if you just walked into the middle of a hearing, you would never know it."

McCollum quickly countered that Democratic disagreements with the agency were about policy, not EPA officials' motivations.

"I do believe EPA cares about the environment, but it is just the way we prioritize some of the work that we do" oppose, McCollum said, clarifying that Simpson's comments did not apply to her.

Outlook

Wheeler is back on Capitol Hill, this time appearing before the Senate Appropriations Interior and Environment Subcommittee. And ranking member Tom Udall (D-N.M.) will not mince words in opposing EPA's budget request.

"I'm tired of the now-commonplace responses from representatives of this administration in our budget hearings," Udall will say, according to prepared remarks.

"We hear repeatedly, year after year, that they would be – quote – 'happy to work with Congress on final spending levels.' It's a wink and the nod that the budget request isn't really real. But that makes a mockery of our process."

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